

# Director's Corner

Updates from DODD Director Jeff Davis

July 8, 2021

## INVESTING in **Ohio's** FUTURE

BUDGET OF THE STATE OF OHIO | FISCAL YEARS 2022-2023



# Governor DeWine Signs 2022-2023 Operating Budget

Last week, Governor Mike DeWine signed House Bill 110, the state's operating budget for fiscal years 2022 and 2023. This bill includes funding for the next two years for initiatives that build on historic investments in the previous budget. Governor DeWine's first budget invested \$370 million of new funding, which was the most ever for Ohio's developmental disabilities system. This budget maintains every one of those investments and invests an additional \$173 million.

Included in the budget are funding and initiatives important to Ohioans with developmental disabilities, their families, and the system that supports them.

**Investing in Workforce and Providers** – Direct supports are the foundation of Ohio's system to support people with developmental disabilities. DODD has advocated, partnered, and led efforts to increase the recruitment and retention of direct support professionals (DSPs) and increased compensation for DSPs. The FY20/21 budget invested \$253 million targeted to increase the compensation of DSPs by increasing the reimbursement rate for homemaker/personal care services. This budget maintains those rates and, through significant advocacy efforts by stakeholders, invests an additional \$127 million to further increase the compensation of DSPs who provide support through residential waiver services as well as those providing support through adult day services. This budget also invests \$34 million into the intermediate care facility rates building on an investment of approximately \$50 million in the previous budget. This amounts to a 4% increase for each service option.

**Investing in Young Children** – This budget continues the investment of the previous budget that doubled the state's commitment to the Early Intervention program. This continued investment of approximately \$24 million in Early Intervention will help families of children ages 0-3 with developmental delays get in-home supports. The increased funding supports the expanded need for services at the local level and allows for expanded eligibility for children diagnosed with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS) and Elevated Blood Levels (EBLLs). These supports are critical to ensuring that children get the best possible start in life.

**Investing in Multi-System Youth** – The budget invests more than \$10.5 million in DODD's efforts and role in supporting youth with complex needs who are supported by multiple service systems. Governor DeWine's budgets and administration have prioritized collaboration, investments, and new initiatives to support these youth and their families. This funding will help youth remain with their families whenever possible through in-home services by trained professionals, provide support for the whole family, provide specialized training for providers when respite or out-of-home placement is necessary, and have funding available for county boards of developmental disabilities to better support youth through local programs for household expenses, family support, and provider support.

**Investing in Technology Supports** – DODD is encouraged by the use of technology in helping people lead better lives throughout Ohio. More can be done, and this budget invests in these possibilities. The budget establishes the Technology First Task Force to bring together state agencies for a coordinated approach to incorporate technology in service options for Ohioans with developmental disabilities. The budget invests \$1.6 million to strengthen the DODD efforts in the use of innovative technology for more Ohioans with developmental disabilities to be more fully integrated into their community and live with greater independence.

Director Jeff Davis commented on the passage of the budget, *"I am grateful for Governor Mike DeWine's and the Ohio General Assembly for their continued support of Ohioans with developmental disabilities and our professional support system."*

He continued. *"This budget builds on Governor DeWine's historically successful first budget and allows us to continue to move forward together on our initiatives. I am appreciative that we are now able to keep and build upon provider rates as they battle a workforce crisis. We are also excited to be able to continue investments in our early intervention program, to create further investment in youth with complex needs, and to invest new funds and energy into technology supports."*

**THANK YOU!** - DODD is appreciative of all the effort and advocacy that goes into a budget. To the people with developmental disabilities and their families whose experiences, feedback, and ideas impact everything the department does. To Governor DeWine's bold leadership on big investments that will make a lasting impact for people with developmental disabilities and their families. To county boards, private providers, DSPs, and other stakeholder organizations who partnered and advocated for this budget.



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